

March 4, 2021

Judiciary Committee
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: TESTIMONY IN FAVOR OF HB-6355

Dear Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom, ranking members Kissel and Fishbein and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee:

My name is Susan Glantz. I am a retired research scientist from Madison and a supporter of CT Against Gun Violence. I am writing in favor of HB-6355, An Act Concerning Risk Protection Orders.

Connecticut's current Extreme Risk Protection Order (ERPO) law, passed in 1999, provides a means of last-resort to temporarily remove firearms from individuals judged to be at risk of imminent harm to themselves or others, while not violating due-process protections. ERPO laws, now implemented in 19 states and D.C., have been shown to prevent firearm suicide and stop mass shootings. I believe that it is our duty to do everything legally possible to prevent the tragedy that unfolded at Sandy Hook from happening again. In addition, since nearly two-thirds of CT gun deaths are by suicide, and firearm suicide is the second leading cause of suicide in our state, we owe it to our citizens to help protect them from suicidal impulses.

HB-6355 would strengthen our existing ERPO law in three important ways:
Requiring a court hearing to demonstrate that the gun owner is no longer a threat before their firearms are returned;
Allowing an ERPO to prohibit an individual at risk of imminent harm to self or others from acquiring a firearm if he/she does not already possess one;
Allowing family, household members and healthcare professionals to directly petition the courts to initiate an ERPO, rather than having to go through law enforcement or states' attorneys.

I urge your committee to support HB-6355 so that the General Assembly can vote to strengthen our Extreme Risk Protection Order law in order that it will work even harder to prevent firearm suicide and homicide. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Susan Glantz
Madison, CT